

The Brethren Evangelist,

ASHLAND, OHIO.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 1895.

THE OHIO STATE CONFERENCE.

The Brethren Sunday-school and Church Conference of Ohio will meet at Ashland, June 4, 1895. The program will appear in next weeks' EVANGELIST. Printed programs will be sent in a few days to all the ministers in the state. They are requested to make the announcement to their congregations, and to see that delegates are elected to both the Sunday-school and Church Conferences. The program should have been published in this issue, but was not quite ready, and as the work of the conference consists mostly of reports, much time for preparation is not needed. The officers, committees, and different boards of the conference, will please have their reports ready. Let the churches of Ohio be well represented. A full delegation is desired. We must be about our "Father's business." It is true, times are "hard," money is scarce, but let us stand together, help each other, devise ways and means for more systematic and efficient work for the Master. Every church in the State should be represented at this conference, if not in person then by letter, but the former is preferable. If money is a scarce article with you, practice economy and self-denial in other matters, and come to Ashland. Do not forget the date—June 4. Look for the program in next issue of the EVANGELIST.

CHURCH UNION.

The subject of church union is one that has agitated the public mind for a number of years, and never before more so than now. There are those who claim that we are not any nearer organic union to day than we were fifty years ago. We are inclined to think differently. A broader view of the situation, as the result of an impartial inquiry into the subject, tends to the belief that church union is not only a possibility, but a probability. We are optimistic enough to believe that the world is getting closer to Christ, and as a natural consequence the various organizations are getting closer to each other. It is an encouraging fact that on the great truths of

the Bible, the vital principles of the Gospel and the essential doctrines of Christianity, the religious world is to-day more nearly of one mind, than it has been at any other period since the days of the apostles. But we do not intend to write at length on this subject. Our thoughts were directed to the subject by the appeal which brother D. C. Moomaw makes in this issue for the union of the German Baptist and Brethren churches. Brother Moomaw asks, "Will Brother Gnagey say a hearty yes?" Certainly. If church union is ever to come, it must begin with the union of those denominations which are practically of the same family. We do not believe that three organizations will long continue to exist in the Dunkard fraternity. Sooner or later they will merge into two. The prejudice which has kept the severed members of this fraternity apart is dying away, and the subject of union is receiving more serious attention. It must be understood, however, that when union comes, it must be on the Gospel alone plan; and this is the only basis on which the churches of Christendom will ever unite.

CONCENTRATED EFFORT.

The two words most suggestive of victory in the Kingdom of God, are: *Consecration* and *concentration*. Years ago, Mr. Moody, in an address to a class of College Bible students, declared that the key to success in the Master's work was,—consecration and concentration. The truth of this statement has been verified a thousand times in every department of church work. These two words constitute the key to success. Wherever you have consecration of church members and concentration of their efforts, victory is assured.

We believe that our sisters are thoroughly consecrated to the service of the Master. In their organized efforts, they are doing the very best they know how, to advance the cause of the blessed Master. We have no advice to offer them or exhortation to give, so far as *consecrated* efforts are concerned, for, as a rule, we believe them to be more consecrated to the service, than men are. But we may be allowed a word on the subject of *concentration*. The S. S. C. E. is engaged in a noble work, a work which commends itself to the favorable consideration of all who love the Master's cause. We find, however, that the sisters are now contributing funds to at least four different ob-

jects, namely:—The support of the Theological Chair; the National Mission Board; the Orphan's Fund, and the Fund for Superannuated Ministers. Now, is not this dividing your efforts? All of the above are worthy objects, but to support all four of them, is impossible, and to divide the funds among the four will leave them in a crippled condition for years to come. If, however, these efforts could be concentrated upon one of these objects, the result would be a glorious victory for at least *one* thing, which is better than a half dozen crippled enterprises and none a success.

The thing to determine is, which of these four enterprises, will at the present time accomplish the most good? This done it is not difficult to determine where the funds ought to go. It is our candid opinion, sisters, that the money now divided among the four objects stated, should be given for *one* purpose only, and that one, the support of the theological chair in Ashland University. The demand for the existence of this department, is becoming more apparent each day, and we are thoroughly convinced that in no other of the four ways can so much good be accomplished, as in the unanimous support of this department in Ashland University. It is surprising, and at the same time encouraging, to learn of the many young men in the brotherhood who are ready to consecrate themselves to the work of the ministry, and willing to prepare themselves more thoroughly to meet the solemn responsibilities and discharge the sacred duties of the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The Brethren church needs, not only more ministers, but a better prepared ministry. How can we secure the latter? Shall our young men who feel the need of a higher preparation, attend other schools to get their instruction? This is what they will do, unless we provide a way for it in our own institution. For let it be remembered that the young man who has even a partial knowledge of the demands of the age in which we live, of the great problems in the social world which face the public teacher and demand of him a solution; who appreciates, even though it be in a small degree, the largeness of the christian ministry, the length and breadth of its arena—let it be remembered that *he* will not enter upon this work without intellectual as well as spiritual training.

We have been with Ashland University for a little more than seven months; our